

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

ACDA-07 IO-13 OMB-01 /089 W
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R 142257Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1238

INFO AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

CINCPAC

SECDEF WASHDC

CNO WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L WELLINGTON 1423

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: NGDS

TAGS: MARR, PFOR, NZ, SN, ASEAN

SUBJ: CALL ON ACTING NEW ZEALAND FOREIGN SECRETARY NORRISH

1. EA DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY EDMOND, ACCOMPANIED BY
DCM KILLGORE, CALLED ON MFA ACTING SECRETARY NORRISH APRIL 14.
DISCUSSION FOCUSSED ON NEW ZEALAND TROOPS IN SINGAPORE,
NPW VISITS AND ASEAN.

2. ACCRording TO NORRISH, WHO ACCOMPANIED DEPUTY PM FOREIGN
MINISTER TALBOYS ON HIS RECENTLY-CONCLUDED TRIP TO ASEAN
CAPITALS, LEE KWAN YEW TOLD TALBOYS THAT BOS WOULD LIKE TO
HVE NEW ZEALAND FORCES WITHDRAWN FROM SINGAPORE. LEE INDICATED
SEA SITUATION COULD NO LONGER ACCOMMODATE "THIS KIND OF
SYMBOLISM". WHEN TALBOYS INDICATED THAT GNZ, DUE TO LACK
OF TROOP ACCOMMODATIONS, MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO BRING FORCES
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HOME UNTIL 1978, LEE UNENTHUSIASTICALLY ACQUIESED TO

CONTINUATION OF NEW ZEALAND PRESENCE UNTIL THEN. FYI GNZ WISHES TO MAINTAIN EFFECTIVENESS OF ITS ARMY BATTALION -- ITS ONLY EFFECTIVE GROUND FORCE -- BY KEEPING IT INTACT ON RETURN TO NEW ZEALAND. NEED TO CREATE ACCOMMODATIONS HAS BEEN RECOGNIZED FOR SOME TIME. HOWEVER, NATIONAL PARTY, ON BECOMING GOVERNMENT, DECELERATED MILITARY CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM FOR BUDGETARY REASONS. THUS, GNZ NOW FACED WITH POLITICAL EMBARRASSMENT OF REVERSING ITS DECISION AND ACCELERATING PROGRAM. IN VIEW OF DOMESTIC SENSITIVITY OF THIS ISSUE, NORRISH ASKED THAT IT BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL. END FYI.

3. ON ASEAN, NORRISH INDICATED TALBOYS AND HE WERE IMPRESSED BY INCREASED SELF-CONFIDENCE WHICH HAS BEEN EVIDENCED SINCE BALI SUMMIT. SIGNIFICANTLY, POLITICAL LEADERS FELT THEY COULD COPE WITH PRESSURES FROM HANOI, WHILE NZ MILITARY WHO WENT ON TRIP INDICATED ASEAN MILITARY LEADERS WERE LESS SANGUINE IN THIS REGARD THAN THEIR CIVILIAN CHIEFS. NORRISH SAID MALAYSIAN PM HUSSEIN ONN IMPRESSED AS BEING LESS FLEXIBLE AND MADE OF STERNER STUFF THAN HIS PREDECESSOR; HE DID NOT GIVE IMPRESSION OF ONE ACTING AS CARETAKER.

4. REGARDING NPW VISITS, NORRISH AGAIN GAVE ASSURANCES THAT AFFIRMATIVE DECISION HAS BEEN MADE BY PM MULDOON AND VISITS WILL TAKE PLACE. THERE IS NO QUESTION OF MULDOON'S FIRMNESS; "NO ONE CAN TOPEDO THIS." HOWEVER, NORRISH ASKED THAT USG BE AS FORTHCOMING AS POSSIBLE IN RESPONDING TO SERIES OF QUESTIONS GNZ HAS POSED ON LEGAL AND SAFETY ASPECTS. HE SAID GNZ BUREAUCRACY MUST BE ABLE TO RESPOND AS CONSTRUCTIVELY AS POSSIBLE TO SINCERELY MOTIVATED AS WELL AS POLITICALLY INSPIRED CRITICISMS. THUS, QUESTIONS POSED USG ARE MOTIVATED BY GNZ'S NEED TO HAVE ON HAND AS MUCH PERTINENT INFORMATION AS POSSIBLE.

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